

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER MULDOON PHILOSOPHIZES ABOUT NEW
- ZEALAND'S RELATIONS WITH TRADITIONAL ALLIES

REF: WELLINGTON 1756 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: FOR SEVERAL YEARS, BOTH AS OPPOSITION LEADER AND PRIME MINISTER, PRIME MINISTER MULDOON HAS WRITTEN A WEEKLY COLUMN, "ROB SAYS," FOR AN OTHERWISE RATHER RANDY LITTLE WEEKLY NEWSPAPER, "TRUTH."

2. PRIMIN'S COLUMN OF APRIL 4 DISCUSSES A BOOK "THE RACE FOR TRIESTE" AND THE PROMINENT ROLE THE NEW ZEALAND DIVISION (IN WHICH HE WAS AN OFFICER) PLAYED IN THE THRUST TO THE ADRIATIC PORT. THE TRIESTE CAMPAIGN, HE WRITES, MARKED THE "BLOODING" OF THE THEN-NEW PRESIDENT TRUMAN. IT WAS, HE SAYS, THE FIRST OF A NUMBER OF TOUGH STANDS

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WHICH TRUMAN TOOK AND WHICH "EARNED (TRUMAN) AN HONORED PAGE IN THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY."
CONTINUING, MULDOON SAYS "OUR FRIENDSHIP WITH THE U.S. HAS ENDURED, AND WE ARE TODAY ONE OF ONLY TWO NATIONS, THE OTHER BEING AUSTRALIA, WHICH HAVE FOUGHT ALONGSIDE THE (U.S.) IN EVERY WAR SINCE WORLD WAR II."

3. ARRIVING AT THE POINT OF THE PIECE, MULDOON WRITES THAT "IN RECENT YEARS THE THREAT TO NEW ZEALAND AND THE LIVING STANDARDS OF ITS PEOPLE HAS BEEN THE GREATEST THREAT WE HAVE HAD TO FACE SINCE THOSE DARK AND DIFFICULT DAYS OF WORLD WAR II. IT IS A THREAT THAT HAS GONE LARGELY UNNOTICED BY THE REST OF THE WORLD." BUT THE MULDOON GOVERNMENT DOES NOT INTEND TO "LET EVENTS SHAPE (NZ'S) FUTURE WHILE (THE GOVERNMENT) SITS AND SILENTLY ACQUIESCES" HE CONTINUES. "TIME AND AGAIN WE HAVE PAID OUR ENTRANCE FEE TO THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE DEMOCRATIC WESTERN WORLD WITH THE BLOOD OF OUR YOUNG MEN, AND TODAY WE LOOK FOR HELP TO OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES OF THOSE WARTIME YEARS. IS THERE TODAY ANOTHER HARRY S. TRUMAN IN THE WHITE HOUSE?"

4. BEGIN LOU: EMBASSY COMMENT: WHILE THE EMBASSY DOES NOT WANT TO ATTRIBUTE ANY PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE TO THIS SINGLE ARTICLE, ITS GENERAL THEME IS ONE THAT WE HAVE BEEN HEARING WITH INCREASING FREQUENCY FROM GNZ OFFICIALS. WITH THE MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS MOVING TOWARD THE CRITICAL TARGET COMPLETION DATE OF JULY, THE GNZ FEELS THAT THE NEXT TWO MONTHS WILL BE CRITICAL IN THE COUNTRY'S EFFORTS TO RECEIVE A MEANINGFUL AGRICULTURAL PACKAGE FROM THE GENEVA EXERCISE. THIS TIMING, COUPLED WITH A GRIM ECONOMIC CLIMATE IN AN ELECTION YEAR PUTS HEAVY PRESSURE ON THE GNZ AND IN TURN MAKES IT LIKELY THAT THE U.S. MAY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXPECT INCREASED URGINGS TO EASE PRESENT QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS ON PRIMARY IMPORTS, PARTICULARLY BUTTER AND CHEESE. IT WOULD ALSO SEEM REASONABLE TO EXPECT SOME INCREASED CRITICISM OF THE U.S. IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW ZEALAND'S BILATERAL TRADE DISCUSSIONS WITH JAPAN AND THE EFC WHERE WELLINGTON, TO REMAIN CREDIBLE, MUST MAINTAIN A POSTURE OF CONCERN AGAINST THE PROTECTIVE POLICIES OF ALL ITS TRADING PARTNERS. IN THIS LIGHT, ON THE POLITICAL LEVEL, WE MAY EXPECT TO HEAR ARGUMENTATION ALONG THE LINES OF THAT EXPRESSED IN THE MULDOON ARTICLE; THAT IS:

(A) NEW ZEALAND HAS BEEN FOR YEARS A TRUSTWORTHY AND DEPENDABLE ALLY;

(B) TODAY IT IS THE PROTECTIONIST AGRICULTURAL POLICIES OF ITS WESTERN FRIENDS AND ALLIES AND THE DIMINISHING ACCESS TO WESTERN MARKETS FOR NZ PASTORAL PRODUCTS WHICH POSE THE GREATEST THREAT TO NZ'S ECONOMIC HEALTHY;

(C) THE WORST OFFENDERS (JAPAN AND THE EEC) IN AGRICULTURE PROTECTIONISM ARE RECEIVING THE BRUNT OF THE GNZ'S CRITI-

CISM AT THE MOMENT;

(D) BUT THE U.S. IS NOT BLAMELESS IN THIS REGARD; AND

(E) GIVEN A TOUGH POLITICAL WILL, THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION
COULD TAKE MEASURES WHICH WOULD EASE NEW ZEALAND'S PLIGHT.

THE FIRST LIKELY HIGH-LEVEL RECIPIENT OF THESE REMARKS
WILL MOST PROBABLY BE THE VICE PRESIDENT DURING HIS VISIT
HERE NEXT MONTH. END COMMENT. END LOU. HEALY

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